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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this learning module is to make the teacher knowledgeable about the ways in which parents of handicapped children can be usefully and effectively involved in the education process. It is also designed to develop some elementary skills in training parents. After a test on selected readings, the students learn how to conduct a survey to determine current attitudes of practitioners toward parental involvement and how to tabulate and analyze the data. Information is presented on parent organizations and programs for the handicapped. Guidelines are given for communicating with parents, parent-teacher conferences, and workshops for parents. Answers to tests are found in the appendix. (JD)

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TOWARD COMPETENCE

Instructional Materials for Teacher Education

Parent Involvement in the Education of
Young Handicapped Children
Module II

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

Shirley Cohen
Hunter College
of the City University of New York

Report No. Case - 03 - 75
March 1975
Competency Based Teacher Education Project

Center for the Advanced Study in Education
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SP 010 514

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

MODULE II:

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

SHIRLEY COHEN, HUNTER COLLEGE
OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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WHAT IS COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION?

The set of materials you are about to begin using represents a new direction in teacher education. Called competency-based teacher education, this approach to training teachers emphasizes the teacher's performance--what he or she is actually able to do as the result of acquiring certain knowledge or skills.

Performance in a specific area is referred to as a competency. Thus, what we expect the teacher to be like after completing his education can be described in terms of the competencies he should have. The emphasis is on doing rather than on knowing, though performance is frequently the result of knowledge.

This shift in emphasis from knowing to doing accounts, to a great extent, for the differences you will notice in the format and content of these materials. To begin with, the set of materials itself is called a module because it is thought of as one part of an entire system of instruction. The focus has been narrowed to one competency or to a small group of closely related competencies. The ultimate aim of the module is expressed as a terminal objective, a statement describing what you, the teacher, should be able to do as a result of successfully completing this module.

Your final performance, however, can usually be broken down into a series of smaller, more specific objectives. As you achieve each of these, you are taking a step toward fulfilling the ultimate goal of the module. Each intermediate objective is the focus of a group of activities designed to enable you to reach that objective.

Together, the activities that make up each element, or part, of the module enable you to achieve the terminal objective.

There are several kinds of objectives, depending on what kind of performance is being demanded of you. For example, in a cognitive-based objective, the emphasis is on what you know. But since these are behavioral objectives, what you know can only be determined overtly. An objective can only be stated in terms of your behavior--what you can do. You might, for instance, be asked to demonstrate your knowledge of a subject by performing certain tasks, such as correctly completing arithmetic problems or matching words and definitions. In addition to cognitive-based objectives, there are performance-based objectives, where the criterion is your actual skill in carrying out a task; consequence-based objectives, for which your success in teaching something to someone else is measured; and exploratory objectives, which are open-ended, inviting you to investigate certain questions in an unstructured way.

Along with the assumption that the competencies, or behaviors, that make for successful teaching can be identified goes the assumption that these competencies can be assessed in some way. In fact, the statement of objectives and the development of assessment procedures form the main thrust of competency-based teacher education. The module, and the activities it contains or prescribes, is just a way of implementing the objectives.

But the module does have certain advantages as an instructional tool. For one thing, it enables you to work on your own and at your own pace. The activities are usually varied so that you can

select those which are best suited to your learning style. And the module enables you to cover certain subject areas with maximum efficiency; since if you pass the pre-assessment for a given objective, you are exempted from the module implementing that objective. What matters is not the amount of classroom time you put in on a subject but your ability to demonstrate certain competencies, or behaviors.

OVERVIEW

Until recently the roles which parents played in most publicly supported education programs were limited. While schools were grateful for the supportive activities of Parent Associations, such as raising funds and honoring staff members, the attitude of educators toward other forms of parent involvement was largely negative. The message communicated clearly, if nondirectly, was: Keep Off. This is our territory.

Economically advantaged parents could find more opportunities for participation by shopping around for cooperative nursery schools or private schools where the atmosphere was more receptive. Low-income parents had no such outlet. Nor did parents of the handicapped. For them the "Keep Off" message was often backed up by residential placements which prevented them from spending more than a few hours a week with their children. In some programs, such as that of the Orthogenic School,[1] the message communicated to parents was even stronger: You had your chance. Look what you did with it! Now stay away so that we may undo some of the damage.

In the mid 1960s this picture began to change. A variety of factors had combined to create pressures for greater participation by parents in the educational process. Many of these factors originated in attempts to better meet the needs of children from poverty areas.

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[1] Bettelheim, B. Love is Not Enough. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1950.

National programs which are outgrowths of this attempt are the Parent-Child Development Centers[2] and Home Start,[3] both under the aegis of the Office of Child Development. In both these programs the teaching role of parents is maximized.

Special education, too, began to change its outlook toward parents in recent years, as parents became more vocal in their rejection of a status quo which relegated their children to inferior educational services. They formed groups which took their case to administrators, policy makers, parent associations, and even to legislators and the courts. They communicated their willingness to help and their desire to be helped by educators. Some parent organization sponsored their own schools because no schools would take their children. Some parents became teaching assistants so that they could learn how to help their own children more. Some parents became participants in home-teaching programs which preceded or supplemented school programs. Some parents have reached the point of rejecting "tokenism" whether it occurs in the form of being informed but not listened to or in the form of being included in planning in name only or in the form of being the token parent on large advisory boards. Instead, they are asking for a real partnership of parents and educators in working toward the common goal of helping handicapped children.

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[2]Costello, J. and Binstock, E. Review and Summary of a National Survey of the Parent-Child Center Program. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Child Development, 1970.

[3]The Home Start Demonstration Program: An Overview. Washington, D. C., U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Child Development, 1973.

The purpose of this module is to make you knowledgeable about the ways in which parents can be usefully and effectively involved in the education process.

The module consists of three elements. Element I is designed to make you knowledgeable about attitudes toward parental involvement, reasons for parental involvement, and roles parents might play. Element II is designed to make you knowledgeable about specific ways in which parents can be involved in the education process. Element III is designed to develop some elementary skills in training parents.

Prerequisites

The only prerequisite for entry into this module is successful completion of Module I or its equivalent -- exemption from Module I because you passed its pre-assessment. If you meet the above prerequisite, you may continue with this module.

Please provide information about your prerequisite qualifications on the sheet your instructor will give you.

How to Take This Module

You have now completed the first two steps in this module, which are to read the overview and make sure you fulfill the prerequisites. The next step is to decide whether you want to continue this module. If you do, you should plan on the module taking approximately a third of a semester to complete. That is, it's equivalent to one third of a three credit course.

If you are continuing, you are ready for the pre-assessment, which begins on page 13. When you have completed the pre-assessment, discuss the results with your instructor. Together you will decide on one of the following entry points:

1. Entry Level I: If you did not demonstrate adequate knowledge on questions 1-5, you should begin with Element I and complete all the activities.
2. Entry Level II. If you demonstrated adequate knowledge on questions 1-5, but not on 6-8, begin with Element II and complete all the activities that follow.
3. Entry Level III. If you demonstrated adequate knowledge on questions 1-8, but not on 9-11, begin the module with Element III and complete all the activities in this element.
4. If you satisfactorily answered all the pre-assessment questions, you are exempt from this module and may consider entry into Module III: Parents as Partners.

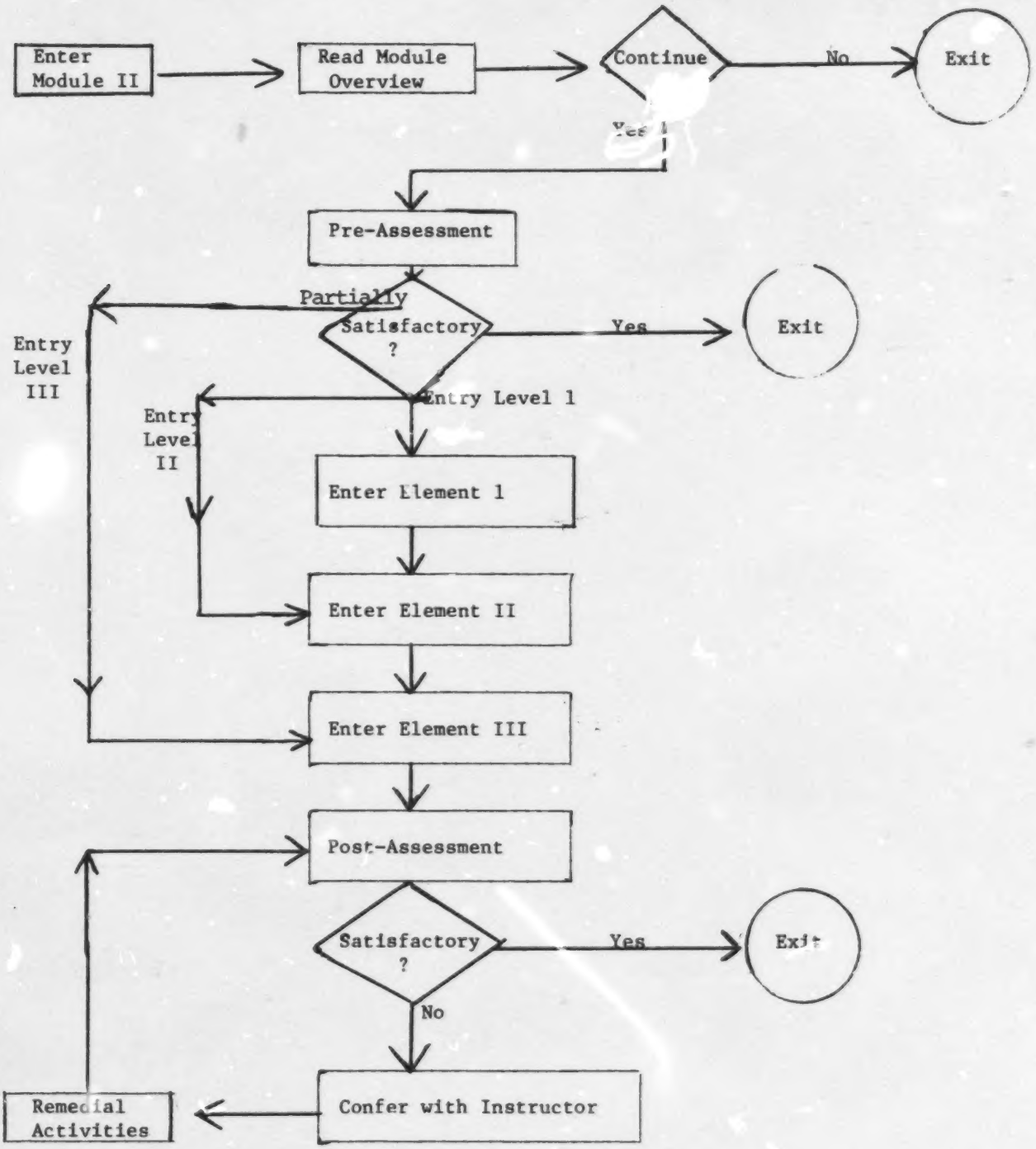
The three elements in this module are designed to enable you to satisfactorily fulfill the terminal objective of the module:

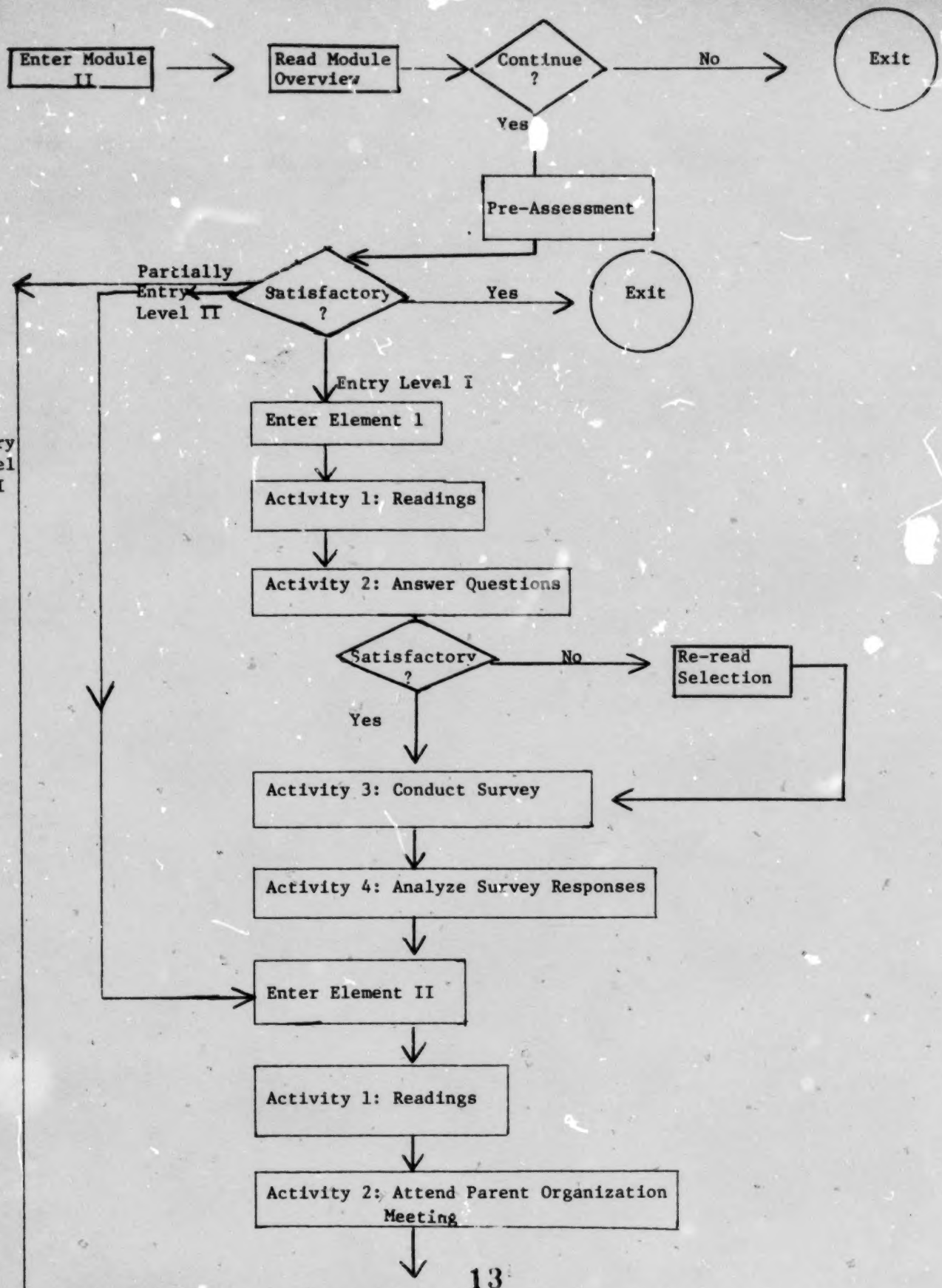
> Given a description of a group made up of five parents of young handicapped children, you will demonstrate skill in planning and carrying out a workshop on home-teaching, under simulated conditions.

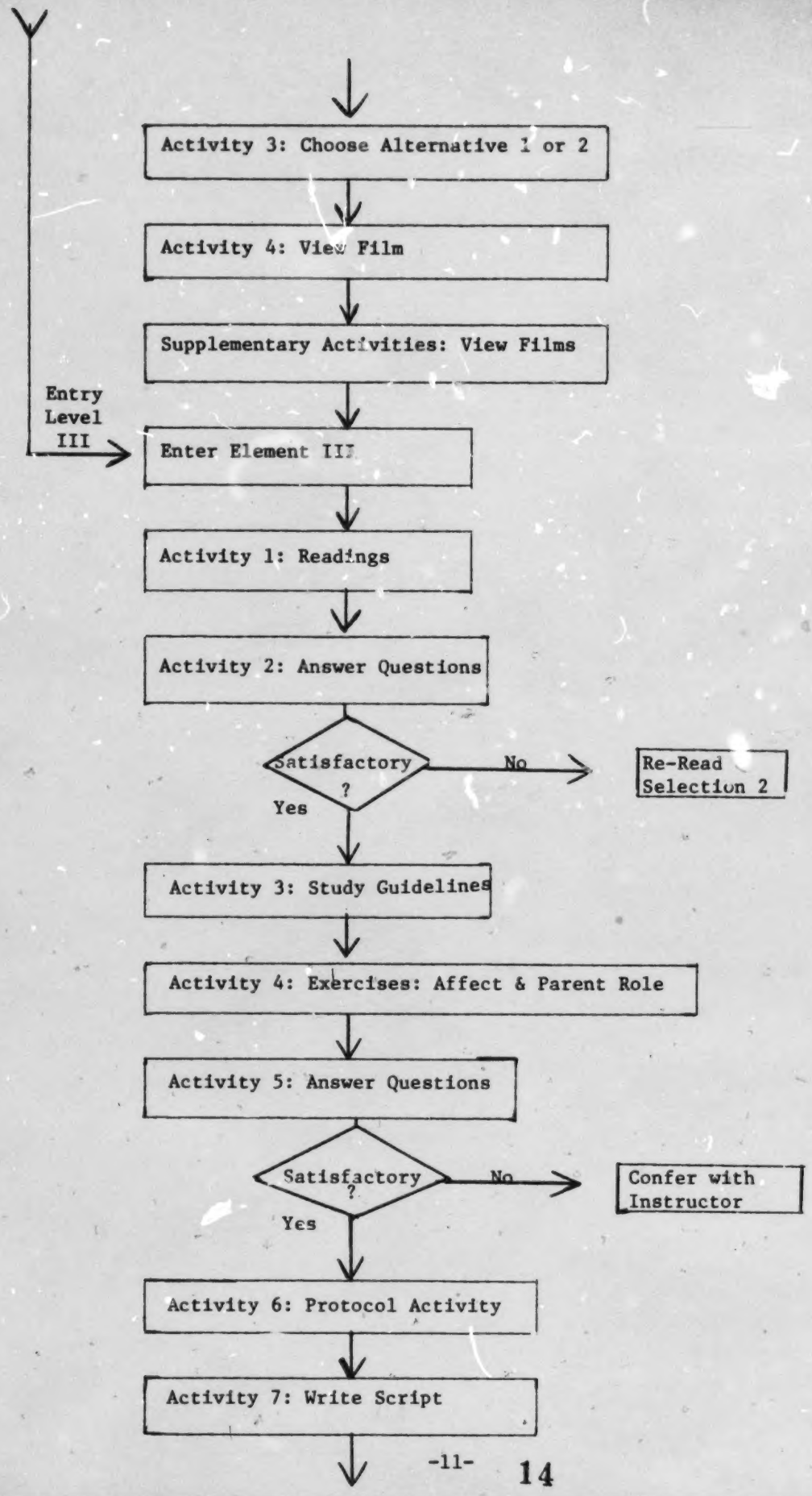
When you have completed Element III, the final element in this module, you will be ready for the post-assessment. Successful completion of the post-assessment indicates that you possess the competencies specified by the terminal objective and are ready to exit the module. If your post-assessment results are unsatisfactory, meet with your instructor to plan remedial activities.

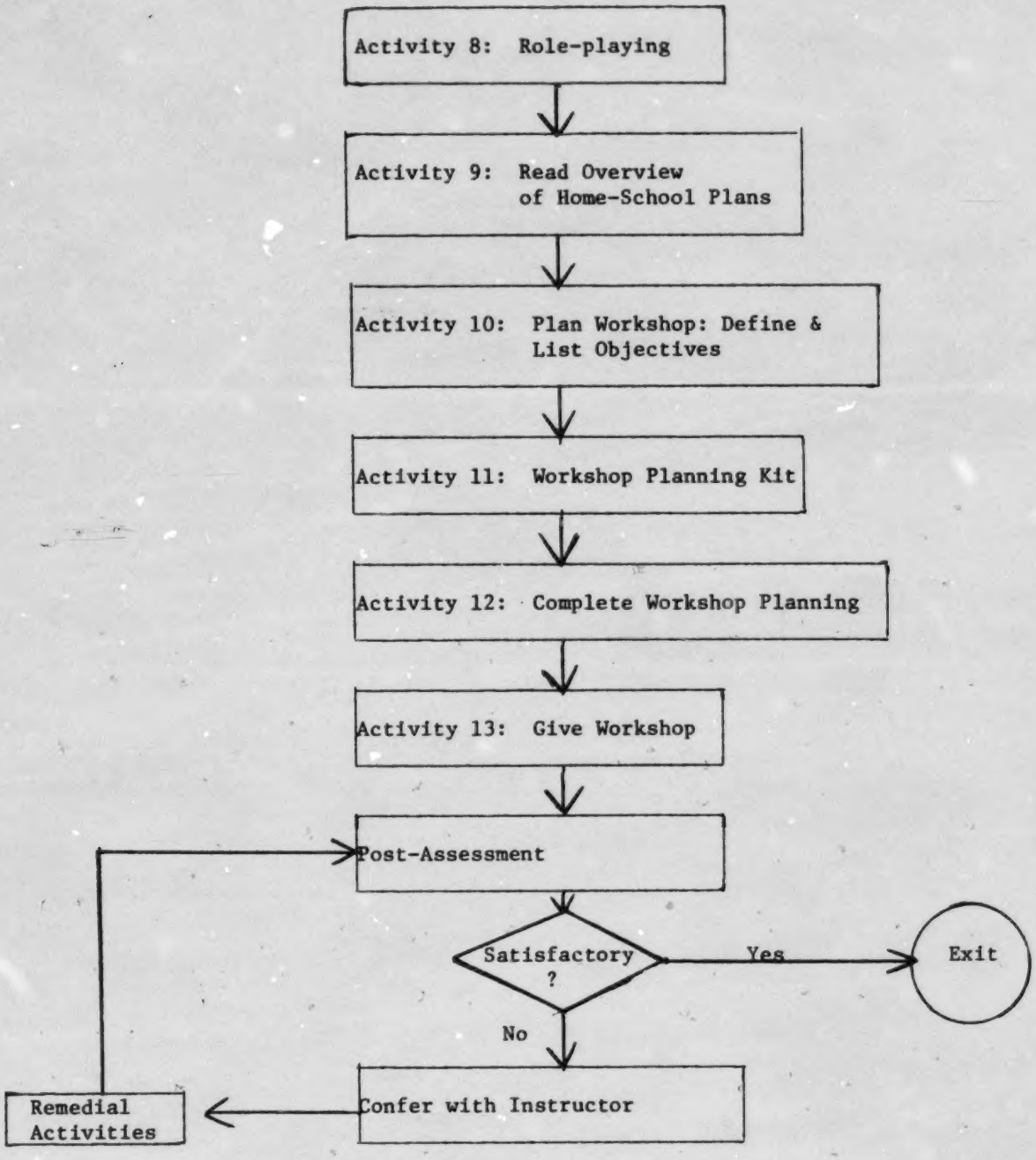
Note that the steps involved in taking this module are shown in graphic form on the flow chart on pages 9-12.

When you are ready to begin, turn to the pre-assessment, which starts on page 13.


Enter Module II
Read Module Overview
Continue
No
Exit
Yes
Pre-Assessment
Partially Satisfactory ?
Yes
Exit
Entry Level III
Entry Level II
Entry Level 1
Enter Element 1
Enter Element II
Enter Element III
Post-Assessment
Satisfactory ?
Yes
Exit
No
Confer with Instructor
Remedial Activities


Enter Module II
Read Module Overview
Continue ?
No
Exit
Yes
Pre-Assessment
Partially Entry Level II
Satisfactory ?
Yes
Exit
Entry Level I
Entry Level III
Enter Element 1
Activity 1: Readings
Activity 2: Answer Questions
Satisfactory ?
No
Re-read Selection
Yes
Activity 3: Conduct Survey
Activity 4: Analyze Survey Responses
Enter Element II
Activity 1: Readings
Activity 2: Attend Parent Organization Meeting


Activity 3: Choose Alternative 1 or 2
Activity 4: View Film
Supplementary Activities: View Films
Entry Level III
Enter Element III
Activity 1: Readings
Activity 2: Answer Questions
Satisfactory ?
No
Re-Read Selection 2
Yes
Activity 3: Study Guidelines
Activity 4: Exercises: Affect & Parent Role
Activity 5: Answer Questions
Satisfactory ?
No
Confer with Instructor
Yes
Activity 6: Protocol Activity
Activity 7: Write Script


Activity 8: Role-playing
Activity 9: Read Overview of Home-School Plans
Activity 10: Plan Workshop: Define & List Objectives
Activity 11: Workshop Planning Kit
Activity 12: Complete Workshop Planning
Activity 13: Give Workshop
Post-Assessment
Satisfactory ?
Yes
Exit
No
Confer with Instructor
Remedial Activities

Pre-Assessment

On separate paper, write an answer to each of the following questions.

1. Give three important reasons for involving parents in the education of young handicapped children.
2. Name three kinds of information the parent can give to the teacher of a handicapped child that would better enable the teacher to help that child.
3. Name three kinds of information the teacher may have about a handicapped child that might enable his parent to better help him at home.
4. Describe three major roles parents can play in the education of young handicapped children.
5. Briefly contrast the major attitude(s) of special educators toward parents twenty years ago as compared with today.
6. Name two national, state, or city-wide parent organizations for the handicapped, and briefly describe the goals and activities of each.
7. Briefly describe benefits, cautions, and guidelines for using parents of the handicapped as teacher aides.
8. Name two major home-based or parent-intervention programs for young handicapped (or disadvantaged) children.

9. Select one of the two major home-based programs named in question #8. Briefly describe its goals and basic approach; then describe its content, methods, and materials in detail.

10. Below is an excerpt from a meeting between the mother of a mildly retarded seven-year-old girl (IQ 67) and her teacher. The child was placed in a special class in the spring of the previous school year because she was not benefitting from instruction in the first grade. It is now September, and her mother has asked for a meeting with the teacher "to find out what you are going to teach my child this year." The child comes from a working-class black family.

After you have read the excerpt, answer the questions that follow by writing the number of your answer(s) on your paper.

Teacher: Good morning, Mrs. M. Come in and sit down.

Mrs. M.: (1) I'm here because I want to know what you're going to teach Esther this year. I don't want her just to waste another year. I want her to learn to read, not be dumb.

Teacher: (2) Esther is not ready to learn to read yet, but she will be doing many interesting things here this year.

Mrs. M.: She can do interesting things at home. She plays with the kids in the street. She has a bike. She watches T.V. Here, I want her to learn. I've tried to teach her myself during the summer.

Teacher: (3) [

Parent responds.

Teacher: There are some ways that you can help Esther get ready to learn to read. Esther has to learn to look carefully at things, be able to match them, and be able to remember what they look like, if she's going to learn to
(4) read. We play games in which she has to match things like coins, pictures, or letters made out of plastic. We also play memory games. I might put out three objects and then cover one. Esther has to tell me which object I covered. Do you do things like that at home?

Mrs. M.: No.

Teacher: Could you? Would you want to?

Mrs. M.: How will that help her learn to read?

Teacher: It won't teach her how to read, but it will
(5) improve her perception and memory.

1. In Statement #1 the mother is

_____ a) Demonstrating her anger at the school.

_____ b) Expressing her concern about her child.

_____ c) Both.

2. A better response instead of Statement #2 would have been

_____ a) We don't try to teach children to read before they are ready, but there are many other important things that we will teach her this year. You can help.

_____ b) I recognize your concern about Esther. It is important for her to learn to read. We will be working on many things that will help her get ready to learn to read.

_____ c) Neither (a) nor (b).

3. Which of the following would have been the best response in the blank numbered 3:

_____a) What happened?

_____b) What did you do?

_____c) You really shouldn't have done that. Parents shouldn't try to teach their children to read.

_____d) (a) and/or (b).

4. Statement #4 is a) appropriate_____.

b) not appropriate _____.

5. Statement #5 is a) good_____.

b) poor_____.

because _____a) it comes right to the point.

_____b) it uses technical assistance.

_____c) it doesn't show the connection between the processes described and reading, which is what concerns the mother.

_____d) (b) and (c).

11. Below is a description of a group of five mothers of handicapped children. You are the teacher of these children. Plan a workshop-type meeting with these mothers. Describe in details the following:

1. Where the meeting will be held (and why).
2. When the meeting will be held (and why).
3. What the objective or objectives for the meeting will be (and why).
4. How you will prepare for the meeting.
5. How you will conduct the meeting (what you will say and do).
6. How you will evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting.

Group Description

These mothers all have six-year-old children who have been labeled "educably retarded" and who are in a special preparatory class in public school. The mothers are very anxious to help their children learn. Two areas, in particular, have been alluded to by them over and over again: self-help skills and school-readiness skills. The families could be described as relatively low-income, working class.

The children (three boys and two girls) have IQs in the range of 61-72. They have been in school for three months. The goals of the school program are to maximize the possibility of integrating these children into regular first-grade classes the following year and to keep them in the mainstream thereafter, with the aid of specialized services.

When you have completed questions 1-11, submit your responses to your instructor. When your pre-assessment has been evaluated, you will know at what point to enter the module or whether you need not enter it at all.

If you are to enter the module at Level I, turn the page and begin Element I.

ELEMENT I

Objectives

1. You will be able to state three reasons for involving parents in the education of young handicapped children.
2. You will be able to identify and briefly describe three ways in which parents can participate in the process of educating young handicapped children.
3. You will be able to describe current attitudes of educators toward parental involvement and contrast these attitudes with those existing approximately thirty years ago.
4. You will be able to name three kinds of information parents have that might enable teachers to better help young handicapped children.
5. You will be able to name three kinds of information teachers have that might enable parents to better help their children at home.

Activity 1

Read the first selection given below plus three of the four other selections listed.

1. Barsch, R. H. The parent-teacher partnership. Arlington, Virginia: The Council for Exceptional Children, 1969.

2. Cohen, S. and Cohen, M. (Eds.) SEIMC services to parents of handicapped children. New York: Regional Special Education Instructional Materials Center, City University of New York at Hunter College, 1972 (ERIC #ED 072 600), 1-67.

*3. Levitt, E. and Cohen, S. An analysis of selected parent intervention programs for handicapped and disadvantaged children. New York: Special Education Development Center, City University of New York at Hunter College, 1973. (Journal of special education, 1975, in press.)

*4. Levitt, E. and Cohen, S. Parents as teachers: A rationale for involving parents in the education of of their young handicapped children. New York: Special Education Development Center, City University of New York at Hunter College, 1973. (Quarterly review of early childhood education, 1975, in press.)

5. Lillie, D. L. (Ed.) Parent programs in child development centers. First Chance for Children, Vol. 1 Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1972.

Additional Readings

Either before or after you go on to Activity 2, you may want to read one or more of the following selections as well.

1. Cansler, D. P. and Martin, G. H. Working with families: A manual for developmental centers. Handicapped Children in Head Start Series. Reston, Virginia: Head Start Information Project, The Council for Exceptional Children, undated.

2. Lazar, J. B. and Chapman, J. E. A review of the present status and future research needs of programs to develop parenting skills. Washington, D.C.: Social Research Group, George Washington University, 1972.

3. Pickarts, E. and Fargo, J. Parent education: Toward parental competence. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971.

4. Sayler, M. L. Parents: Active partners in education. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators, National Education Association, 1971.

5. Schaefer, E. S. Parents as educators: Evidence from cross-sectional longitudinal and intervention research. Young children, 27, 1972, 227-239.

6. Stein, S. and Smith, C. Return of Mom. Saturday review, April, 1973, 37-40.

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*All selections that are starred are included in the module package.

Activity 2

Answer the following questions based on the readings. Then check your answers against the answer key in the Appendix (p.73). If you missed more than two questions, re-read selection 1. (Barsch, 1969) before going on to Activity 3.

True	False	
☐	☐	1. According to Barsch, most parents regard special education teachers favorably.
☐	☐	2. According to Barsch, most teachers of handicapped children regard the parents of their pupils favorably.
☐	☐	3. The first step in establishing a parent-teacher relationship is to respond to each parent as an individual.
☐	☐	4. Parent-teacher conferences always lead to better home-school cooperation.
☐	☐	5. Many parents enter a parent-teacher conference with a feeling of inferiority in relation to the teacher.
☐	☐	6. In every parent-teacher conference, the teacher should learn something about the child.
☐	☐	7. The parents of a special child must be given a meaningful place in the education program if optimal benefits are desired for the child.
☐	☐	8. The special education teacher is generally qualified to carry out a counseling relationship with the parent.

True	False	
☐	☐	9. The special education teacher should seek to enlist the parent in the teaching objectives for the child.
☐	☐	10. The parent can most helpfully be viewed by the teacher as a teaching associate.
☐	☐	11. Remodeling the psychic organization of the parent is a relevant teacher goal.
☐	☐	12. Teaching responsibility is an integral part of parenthood.
☐	☐	13. Societal standards provide a set of objectives to be accomplished through a parental teaching process.
☐	☐	14. The method of child rearing used by parents most often grows out of trial and error.
☐	☐	15. The perception of the child's handicap by the parent is usually the same as the teacher's.
☐	☐	16. The perception and attitude of the parent toward the child's handicap is irrelevant to the teaching process.
☐	☐	17. The linking of classroom and home behaviors is one approach to fusing the perceptual spheres of both teachers and parents.
☐	☐	18. Parents differ in their abilities as learners.
☐	☐	19. Parents differ in their learning styles.
☐	☐	20. There are many cautions and guidelines to be considered before using parents as homework instructors or home tutors.

True	False	
☐	☐	21. Some parents should not be asked to assume the roles of homework instructor or home tutor.
☐	☐	22. In the normal course of family living the child has literally thousands of opportunities for learning.
☐	☐	23. Training parents to be observers of child learning in the home is one of the first steps in the Bi-curricular Approach.
☐	☐	24. The Bicurricular Approach emphasizes formal learning activities carried over from the classroom.
☐	☐	25. In the Bicurricular Approach, parents provide functional opportunities for refining and integrating school learning through daily living activities.

Activity 3

In this activity you will conduct a survey to learn about the current attitudes of practitioners toward parental involvement in education. You will obtain responses to a questionnaire from four educators of young handicapped children. The educators you interview may include any professional school personnel involved with this population (teachers, psychologists, counselors, administrators) or any college personnel training students to work with this population.

A sample of the questionnaire follows. (Your instructor will supply you with actual copies.) Study the questionnaire yourself before seeking out respondents. When all four questionnaires have been completed, go on to Activity 4, where they will be used.

Survey Questionnaire

Dear Respondent:

The questionnaire below is being used in a project to train teachers of young handicapped children. Each trainee is being asked to collect responses from four educators. Can you help by taking a few minutes to answer the questions below?

Respondent's position:

Teacher-aide	_____	Ancillary staff (psychologist, social worker, counselor)	_____
Teacher	_____		
Supervisor or Administrator	_____	College Instructor	_____

Number of years of experience: under 3 _____ 5 - 10 _____

3 - 5 _____ over 10 _____

Name of school or other institution in which employed:

_____

What role(s) do you believe parents of young handicapped children should play in the educational process? Please check the appropriate space next to each statement below.

Yes	No	
___	___	1. They should encourage their children to do what the teacher says.
___	___	2. They should take the children on as many trips as possible, read to them, and explain things to them.
___	___	3. They should attend counseling groups run by a social worker, psychologist, or counselor at the school.

Yes	No	
___	___	4. They should meet with the teacher to get suggestions for how they can help their children learn better.
___	___	5. They should be trained by the teacher or others in the school in home-teaching techniques.
___	___	6. They should serve as homework helpers.
___	___	7. They should be used as teaching assistants in classes.
___	___	8. They should work as teaching assistants in the same classrooms in which their children are placed.
___	___	9. They should be used to welcome and gain the support of the parents of new children admitted into school programs.
___	___	10. They should meet with the teacher to exchange ideas on how both can work together to help the child learn better.
___	___	11. They should be invited to serve on planning and advisory committees on special education in the school system.
___	___	12. They should be used as trainers of other parents (for example, in home-teaching and management techniques).

Please add any appropriate roles which have been left out.

Comments:

Activity 4

Meet with your instructor and the other members of your class who are using this module to pool, tabulate, and analyze the responses to the questionnaires. Note especially the kind of parent-teacher relationship reflected in the statements on the questionnaire. Statements 1 and 2 represent the traditional role relegated to parents; statement 3 reflects a belief in help from the school (not from the teacher) for the parent; statements 4 and 5 reflect a belief in direct help from the teacher to the parents on child learning; statements 6-8 reflect direct involvement of parents in the learning process in an assisting role (in 6 only in relation to their own child, in 7 and 8 in relation to other children); statement 9 reflects the use of parents in an assisting role in relation to other parents; statements 10-12 reflect an associate or partner role for parents.

Some of the questions to which you might address yourself in the group discussion are listed below.

-- What proportion of respondents indicated support for parents in partnership or associate roles?
-- What proportion indicated support for parents in assisting roles?
-- What proportion indicated support for parents as recipients of aid?
-- What proportion indicated support only for the traditional role?
-- Were there any differences in relation to the parent roles supported between respondents with different lengths of experience?
-- Were there any differences in relation to the parent role supported between respondents with different positions in the school?

-- How does the data obtained from the survey compare with the ideas presented in the readings in Activity 1? If there are incongruencies, discuss possible explanations for them.

ELEMENT II

Objectives

1. You will be able to name two national, state, or city-wide parent organizations for the handicapped, and describe the goals and activities of each.
2. You will be able to describe benefits derived from, and cautions and guidelines for, using parents of the handicapped as teacher aides.
3. You will be able to name two home-based programs for young handicapped and disadvantaged children and describe the major components of each.

Activity 1

Read each of the following selections. Complete the follow-up activity given for each of the first two selections before going on to the next selection.

1. Most issues of the Exceptional Parent magazine contain a description of one national parent organization for the handicapped. Read three of these descriptions. Report on what you learned according to the directions on Report Form #1 at the end of this activity. (particularly relevant to Objective 1)

2. Select one parent organization and read three issues of its newsletter which are less than two years old. Use Report Form #2, at the end of this activity, to record your findings. (particularly relevant to Objective 1)

3. Cohen, S. and Cohen, M. (Eds.) SEIMC services to parents of handicapped children. New York: Regional Special Education Instructional Materials Center, City University of New York at Hunter College, 1972 (ERIC #ED 072 600), 68-84, 93-103. (particularly relevant to Objective 2)

4. Doernberg, N., Rosen, B., and Walker, T. A home training program for young mentally ill children. New York: League School for Seriously Disturbed Children, undated. (particularly relevant to Objective 3)

5. Nimnicht, G. P., et. al. Librarian manual for the parent/child toy-lending library. Morristown, New Jersey: General Learning Corp., 1971.

*6. Susser, P. Parents as partners. The exceptional parent, 4, 1974, 41-47. (particularly relevant to Objective 2)

Additional Readings

Before you go on to Activity 2, you may want to read one or more of the following selections as well.

1. Badger, E. D. A mother's training program. Children today, 1972, I, 7-36.

2. Baldwin, V., Fredericks, H. D., and Brodsky, G. Isn't it time he outgrew this? A training program for parents of retarded children. Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas, 1973.

3. Becker, W. C. Parents are teachers: A child-management program. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press, 1971.

4. Benson, J. and Ross, L. Teaching parents to teach their children. Teaching exceptional children, 5, 1972, 30-35.

5. Boger, R. P. and Kuipers, J. Parents are teachers too: Teachers manual, Vols. I and II. East Lansing, Michigan: Institute for Family and Child Study, Michigan State University, 1971.

6. Caldwell, B. Home-teaching activities. Little Rock, Arkansas: Center for Early Development and Education, undated.

7. Giesy, R. (Ed.) A guide for home visitors. Nashville: Demonstration and Research Center for Early Education (DARCEE), George Peabody College, 1970.

8. Karnes, M.B. and Zehrbach, R.R. Flexibility in getting parents involved in the school. Teaching exceptional children, 1972, 5, 6-19.

9. Levenstein, P. Learning through (and from) mothers. Childhood education, 1971, 48, 130-134.

10. Levitt, E. and Cohen, S. Approaches to educating parents as teachers of handicapped and disadvantaged children. Young children, in press.

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*Starred selections are included in module package.

11. Ypsilanti Home and School Handbooks

a. Wittes, G. and Radin, N. Helping your child to learn: The learning-through-play approach. San Rafael, California: Dimensions Publishing Company, 1969.

b. Wittes, G. and Radin, N. Helping your child to learn: The nurturance approach. San Rafael, California: Dimensions Publishing Company, 1969.

c. Wittes, G. and Radin, N. Helping your child to learn: The reinforcement approach. San Rafael, California: Dimensions Publishing Company, 1969.

Report Form #1

1. Name the three organizations about which you read.

   1. _____

   2. _____

   3. _____

2. Describe the major objectives of each organization.

   1. _____

      _____

      _____

   2. _____

      _____

      _____

   3. _____

      _____

      _____

3. Describe the major activities of each organization.

   1. _____

      _____

      _____

   2. _____

      _____

      _____

   3. _____

      _____

      _____

Comments:

Report Form #2

1. Name the parent organization newsletter you read, with the dates or numbers of the issues.

_____

_____

2. On the basis of these newsletter issues, describe the major activities of this organization. Give examples.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Comments:

Activity 2

Select two parent organizations which have headquarters or chapters in your area. Attend one of the meetings of each of these organizations. Write a brief report on what you learned from each of these meetings which will influence you in your role as an educator of young handicapped children. Hand in your report to the instructor.

Activity 3

Choose one of the following alternatives:

1. With the help of your instructor, identify local programs which use parents of the handicapped as school teaching assistants. Arrange to observe in one of these programs; then write a brief summary of what you observed, making sure to comment on the following:
   -- What did the parent do in the classroom? What kinds of tasks did she or he carry out?
   -- What was the observable nature of the relationship between teacher and parent?
   -- On the basis of your observations, if you were to become a teacher in that program next year, would you want to use parent assistants? Explain why (or why not) or what modifications you would want to see made. Hand in your summary to the instructor.

OR

2. Attend a group session arranged by your instructor at which a parent who works as a teaching assistant and an educator from the same program make a presentation and are then interviewed. Before attending this session, each trainee is to prepare two questions in writing, which will be given to the presenters.

Activity 4

Your instructor will schedule the film "Learning in Joy" for a group showing. When the film is over, your instructor will guide you and the other trainees in a discussion of the following:

--- What are the basic premises of this (Mother-Child Home) program?

--- Would this program be appropriate or inappropriate for handicapped children? Why?

--- What modifications might have to be made if this program were to be used for handicapped children?

--- What are the advantages and disadvantages of formal, standard home-teaching programs as compared to teacher-devised home-teaching plans?

--- Compare this program with the Parent/Child Toy Lending Library in respect to the population for which it was designed, the techniques used, the applicability to the handicapped.

--- Compare the Mother-Child Home Program and the Parent/Child Toy Lending Library to the Home-Training Program developed at the League School for Seriously Disturbed Children. (particularly relevant to Objective 3)

Before you go on to Element III, you may want to do one or more of these activities.

Supplementary Activities

1. View two of the sound filmstrips from the Parent/Child Toy Lending Library. Write a brief description (or list) of the kinds of information provided to parents on the filmstrips. Discuss your paper with your instructor.
2. View the sound filmstrip "Learning in the Home: Family Activities That Teach" and read the accompanying Group Leader's Guide. After viewing the filmstrip and reading the guide, complete the questionnaire which follows. Discuss it with your instructor.

Questionnaire

for

"Learning in the Home: Family Activities That Teach"

1. List three skills many young handicapped children need to master that can be appropriately developed in the home.

   1._____

   2._____

   3._____

2. List three activities natural to the home setting which will increase mastery of each of the above skills.

   1. a)_____

      b)_____

      c)_____

   2. a)_____

      b)_____

      c)_____

   3. a)_____

      b)_____

      c)_____

3. List twelve common household objects a young handicapped child might not be skilled in using that he could profitably be involved in learning to use.

1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.

ELEMENT III

Objectives

1. To develop preparatory skills in communicating to parents:

   a. You will be able to identify the affective components of parent-teacher communications.

   b. You will be able to supply teacher responses in parent-teacher conferences that help support a home-school partnership.

2. To develop preparatory skills in planning both individual conferences and small group workshops as a means of stimulating and guiding home teaching:

   a. Given descriptions of handicapped children and their families, you will plan and role-play individual parent-teacher conferences.

   b. You will design group workshops and play the role of parents in these workshops to achieve specified objectives for specific populations.

Activity 1

Communicating with parents is basic to any parent-teacher relationship. No matter how knowledgeable the teacher is about a child and about activities which would be helpful to him, if she relates inappropriately to the parents, a home-school partnership will not be established. The parent-teacher conference is the most common form of communication between teacher and parents, and will, therefore, be used as an example for study.

Read the selections listed below.

*1. LeFevre, C. Face to face in the parent-teacher conference. The Elementary School Journal, 1967, 68, 1-8.

2. Langdon, G. and Stout, I. W. Teacher-parent interviews. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1954. Chapters 4, 5, 8, 10, 12.

3. Cohen, S. A checklist for parent-teacher conferences. New York: The Special Education Development Center, City University of New York, 1974, mimeo. (See Appendix, pp. 74-75.)

4. Kroth, R. Facilitating educational progress by improving parent conferences. Focus on Exceptional Children, 1972, 4, (#7), 1-10.

Activity 2

Answer the following questions based on the readings. Then check your answers against the answer key in the Appendix (p. 76). If you missed more than two questions, you have not read thoughtfully. Re-read selection 2 before going on to Activity 3.

1. Give one advantage and one disadvantage of incidental parent-teacher meetings.

   Advantage_____

   _____

   Disadvantage_____

   _____

2. Give two conditions under which telephone interviews may fulfill a valuable function.

   1._____

   _____

   2._____

*Starred selections are included in the module package.

3. Give two advantages and one disadvantage of including a young handicapped child in a parent-teacher meeting.

Advantage_____

_____

Advantage_____

_____

Disadvantage_____

_____

4. Give two advantages and one disadvantage of holding a parent-teacher meeting in the child's home.

Advantage_____

_____

Advantage_____

_____

Disadvantage_____

_____

5. Give two steps which the teacher should take to prepare herself for a meeting with a parent.

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

6. When parents express negative or strongly ambivalent feelings toward their child, the teacher should do which of the following? Check the answer(s) you find appropriate.

-- Try to talk them out of feeling this way.

-- Tell them their child must sense and be hurt by their attitude toward him.

-- Listen but not deal with these expressions during the meeting. Afterwards, alert the school clinician of the possible need for his help in this situation.

7. Which of the following questions may the teacher want to ask the parent about? Check the answer(s) you find appropriate.

   -- What school activities does the child talk about at home?

   -- What kind of play does the child engage in at home?

   -- What kind of control methods (discipline) do the parents find that their child responds to best?

8. Which of the following are the types of things a teacher may want to tell parents? Check the answer(s) you find appropriate.

   -- The daily schedule and why it is planned that way.

   -- Classroom rules.

   -- What the teacher is giving special emphasis to now in their child's learning.

   -- Negative feelings expressed by the child about his parents.

9. If a parent comes to school angry about some incident, the teacher should do which of the following? Check the answer(s) you find appropriate.

   -- Immediately explain what happened.

   -- Send the parent to the principal.

   -- Let the parent tell her story first. Then offer an explanation or take other appropriate action.

10. Which of the following factors may influence a teacher's reactions to the parents of her pupils? Check the answer(s) you find appropriate.

-- The teacher's feelings toward her own parents.

-- The teacher's competitiveness.

-- The teacher's attitude toward authority.

Activity 3

Study the guidelines below.

Some Guidelines for Individual Parent-Teacher Conferences[4]

Opening the Conference

-- When conferences are parent-initiated, the parent should be allowed and encouraged to relate what is on his mind. Sometimes a brief statement, such as "Please tell me what's on your mind," helps.

-- When conferences are teacher-initiated, the teacher may begin the interview by stating her purpose in calling the meeting, e.g., "I'm tring to get to know all the parents so that I can help the children better" or "I asked you to meet with me so that we could talk about how Joy is doing."

The Body of the Conference

-- A conference should be a dialogue, not a monologue or a lecture.

-- One of the best ways to encourage parents to offer information and present their viewpoints is to ask open questions. An open question is one which gives the parent wide scope in expressing

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[4]Some of the ideas presented here were adapted from the following sources: Benjamin, A. The helping interview. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1969. Werner, M. J. The parent teacher conference: A learning package. Bellingham, Washington: Western Washington State College, undated.

his views, e.g., "How do you feel about Ronnie's progress in speaking?"

-- Closed questions are useful in obtaining specific bits of information, e.g., "Did Greg tell you that he got a reader last week?" When overused, they inhibit dialogue.

-- Types of questions that generally have limited usefulness in parent-teacher interviews include the following: questions that imply criticism ("Why does Rose come to school without a hat in this cold weather?"); questions that attempt to influence the response ("You don't really mean that, do you?"); and questions that give the answer ("It's obvious that he was angry, isn't it?").

-- Parents will sometimes bombard teachers with questions. Teachers need to understand that they need not give an answer to every question. Sometimes one teacher is not in a position to answer a question. This should be communicated to the parent.

-- Teacher participation in conferences always includes listening.

-- Teacher participation in conferences often includes the following: asking questions; restating what a parent says to clarify the statement for both the parent and the teacher; offering concrete information; offering explanations; offering ideas, i.e., suggestions of which the parent may or may not avail himself.

-- Teacher participation in conferences sometimes includes the following: reassuring parent, e.g., of the basic soundness of their approach to their child; specific directions for parent, e.g., on how to help their child master a particular skill.

Closing the Conference

-- Hopefully, some understanding will be reached between parent and teacher as the conference comes to a close, even if this "understanding" is on the need to meet again to continue to work on a problem.

-- The teacher should recap her view of this understanding. This will provide mutual feedback to verify that agreement has taken place.

-- Plans for follow-up of some kind should be defined.

Activity 4

When parents and teachers meet, there are many kinds of interactions and relationships possible. The teacher needs to be sensitive not only to the management and content aspects of parent-teacher conferences, but also to the affective aspects. In addition to the positive and negative aspects of the parent-teacher interaction, one would want to consider what the teacher communicates in terms of how she views the parental role. This may range from relating to parents as partners to perceiving parents as outside the educational process. The exercises below were designed to sensitize you to these affective kinds of communication. Read the interview excerpts given and mark each

one according to the following lettered designations for Affect and Parent Role.

Affect

a) Parent and teacher positive

b) Parent negative; teacher positive

c) Parent positive; teacher negative

d) Parent and teacher negative

Parent Role

a) Parent-teacher partnership (joint definition of goals and planning in regard to methods)

b) Teacher dominant but inclusive (teacher identifies goals and methods but includes parent as participant in working toward goals)

c) Teacher dominant and exclusive (teacher identifies goals and methods, and excludes parent from any active role in working toward goals)

After you have answered the questions which follow, turn to page 78 of the Appendix to check your answers. If you miss more than one correct answer, meet with your instructor.

Interview Excerpts

1. Parent: Good morning, Miss Burke. I'm Danny Martin's mother. I came a little early.

   Teacher: You certainly did! Please wait downstairs until 3 o'clock.

   Affect: _____

2. Teacher: What can I do for you, Mrs. Martin?

Parent: I'm worried about Danny. He doesn't seem to be making much progress in learning to read and he's almost eight.

Teacher: That's not true! He's beginning to develop a sight vocabulary. I have a whole program mapped out for him, and he'll be reading before the end of the year. Now don't you worry, I'm taking care of it.

Parent Role_____

3. Parent: I'm very upset about the way Jeffrey has been treated in this class. The other children are allowed to push him around. He comes home from school a mess, with food or paint all over him. I take good care of my child and I expect the school to do the same.

Teacher: Mrs. C., it's very obvious that Jeffrey is a well-cared for child, and I know how hard it can be for a parent to keep a cerebral palsied child like Jeffrey looking neat. Let's talk about what we're doing in school and why. If you still feel this way afterward, maybe we can find some way to do things that will be good for Jeffrey but won't make you unhappy.

Affect _____

Parent role_____

4. Parent: Is there anything that I can do to help Theresa? I'm not so educated, but I'll do whatever I can!

Teacher: That's good. That will help Theresa. I'll send you a note every Friday telling you what Theresa needs to practice and how to do it. You can help her on the weekend.

Affect _____

Parent role _____

5. Teacher: Come in, Mrs. W.

Parent: Why did you call for me? Can't you teachers handle nothing yourself? Every time my kid gets into a little trouble they call me.

Teacher: I'm sorry to hear that you were only called in about trouble before, but I did not call you in this time about trouble. I called you in to talk about what Richard is doing in school and how we can help him learn better. I'm talking to all the mothers of the children in this class.

Affect: _____

Activity 5

Below are excerpts from parent-teacher conferences. In each instance you are to identify what is poor in the teacher statement and rewrite it so as to make it more helpful. When you have answered the questions that follow, turn to page 78 of the Appendix to check your responses. If you have missed more than one, meet with your instructor.

1. Parent-initiated conference

Teacher: I was very glad to hear that you wanted to meet with me. I have so much to tell you, I don't know where to start first.

Poor: _____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

2. Teacher-initiated conference

Teacher: I thought we might get together today and chat. Is there anything you would like to tell me?

Poor: _____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

3. Introduction of the idea of home teaching

Teacher: We both want to help Larry learn, and I can give you a definite program to use at home that will make all the difference in how much he achieves.

Poor: _____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

4. Eliciting the parent's point of view

Teacher: Do you think Larry is making good progress?

Poor: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Teacher: I'm very concerned about Larry not eating anything before he leaves for school. He starts to get restless and asks for cookies at about 9:30 even though our snack things don't arrive until 10:15.

Poor: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

_____

6. Mother: My husband and I fight constantly about Larry. He wants him to act like a normal boy of eight and criticizes him every time he doesn't. I tell him that Larry is handicapped and can't be expected to act like an eight-year-old. I don't know what to do about this. We don't have a minute of peace in the house. My husband and I are always angry at each other.

Teacher: That atmosphere is bad for Larry. Why doesn't your husband come in here to meet with us? Maybe the three of us could straighten it out.

Poor: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Better _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Parent: I try very hard never to scream at Larry when he does things wrong, because I know he's trying and it's hard for him. Sometimes I can't help it.

Teacher: I bet Larry does make you feel very angry at times. Sometimes you probably wish he hadn't been born.

Poor: _____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

8. Parent: I'd like to help Larry with his work, but I'm not sure that I know how. And I do have the younger children around.

Teacher: This will only take twenty minutes of your time every day. I'm sure you can arrange to be free for such a short period of time.

Poor: _____

_____

_____

Better: _____

_____

_____

Activity 6

The protocol for part of a parent-teacher conference provided in Question 10 of the pre-assessment is given again below. This time the protocol covers the entire interview. Answer all of the questions following the protocol and give a rationale for each of your answers in the space provided. When you have completed this assignment, turn to page 81 of the Appendix and check your answers against those provided. If you don't understand or accept any of the answers, discuss them with your instructor.

Below is a protocol of a meeting between the mother of a mildly retarded seven-year-old girl (IQ 67) and her teacher. The child was placed in a special class in the spring of the previous school year because she was not benefitting from instruction in the first grade. It is now September and her mother has asked for a meeting with the teacher "to find out what you are going to teach my child this year." The child comes from a working-class black family.

Teacher: Good morning, Mrs. M. Come in and sit down.

Mrs. M.: (1) I'm here because I want to know what you're going to teach Esther this year. I don't want her just to waste another year. I want her to learn to read, not be dumb.

Teacher: (2) Esther is not ready to learn to read yet, but she will be doing many interesting things here this year.

Mrs. M.: She can do interesting things at home. She plays with the kids in the street. She has a bike. She watches T. V. Here I want her to learn. I've tried to teach her myself during the summer.

Teacher (3) [

Parent responds.

Teacher: (4) [There are some ways that you can help Esther get ready to learn to read. Esther has to learn to look carefully at things, be able to match them, and be able to remember what they look like, if she's going to learn to read. We play games in which she has to match things like coins, pictures, or letters made out of plastic. We also play memory games. I might put out three objects and then cover one. Esther has to tell me which object I covered. Do you do things like that at home?

Mrs. M.: No

Teacher: Could you? Would you want to?

Mrs. M.: How will that help her learn to read?

Teacher: (5) [It won't teach her how to read, but it will improve her perception and memory.

Mrs. M.: I don't have much time at home. I have two other children, too.

Teacher: (6) [You can do some learning things as you do your regular work. Does Esther like to help you with cooking and other housework?

Mrs. M.: Esther hangs around me all the time. Sometimes I let her help me, but sometimes she just gets in the way.

Teacher: (7) [What kinds of things can she help you with?

Mrs. M.: She puts away the groceries.

Teacher: Are there any other things she can put away for you in the right places, like cutlery (silverware) or dishes? Would she be able to put the small spoons in one place, the big ones in another, and so on?

Mrs. M.: I guess so.

Teacher: In doing that kind of thing, Esther has to look carefully at what she's putting away and remember where it belongs. How about putting away laundry?

(8) [Can she match socks, make piles of clothes that go into the same drawer, and then put them in the right place?

Mrs. M.: I guess I could let her help me with that if I teach her first.

Teacher: (9) Yes, she probably would need some help from you at first.

Mrs. M.: I'll try it, but I'm still really interested in her reading.

Teacher: If you think you can find some time when you and Esther can work alone, maybe we can plan some things for you to do like matching pictures and letters. Why don't you think about it? You would probably need twenty minutes a day. In the meantime you could try some of the things we talked about today.

(10) If you like, I can give you a sheet that I made up for parents with more ideas for things to do at home.

Mrs. M.: I'll take it.

Teacher: Could we set a date to meet again to talk about how things are going?

Mrs. M.: I don't know how soon I'll have the time to do these things.

Teacher: (11) Why don't you send me a note when you're ready to meet with me again.
In the meantime, I'll be thinking about the things you told me today so that maybe I'll have more ideas ready by the next time we meet.

1. In Statement #1 the mother is

_____ a) Demonstrating her anger at the school.

_____ b) Expressing her concern about her child.

_____ c) Both.

2. A better response for Statement #2 would have been

_____ a) We don't try to teach children to read before they are ready; but there are many other important things that we will teach her this year. You can help.

_____ b) I recognize your concern about Esther. It is important for her to learn to read. We will be working on many things that will help her get ready to learn to read.

_____ c) Neither (a) nor (b)

3. Which of the following would have been the best response in Statement #3:

_____a) What happened?

_____b) What did you do?

_____c) You really shouldn't have done that. Parents shouldn't try to teach their children to read.

_____d) (a) and/or (b).

4. Statement #4 is appropriate _____.

not appropriate _____.

5. Statement #5 is good _____

poor _____

because _____ a) it comes right to the point.

_____ b) it uses technical language.

_____ c) it doesn't show the connection between the processes described and reading, which is what concerns the mother.

_____ d) (b) and (c).

6. Statement #6 is appropriate _____.

not appropriate _____.

7. Why did the teacher ask the question she did in Statement #7 rather than just suggest some activities at this time?

_____

_____

_____

8. Is the teacher's suggestion in Statement #8 appropriate at this point? yes_____ no_____

9. What is the teacher doing in Statement #9?

_____ a) Restating for her own and the parent's clarification

_____ b) Restating for support of the parent

_____ c) Implying criticism of the parent

_____ d) Both (a) and (b)

10. Statement #10 is a good idea because

_____ a) It gives the parent a choice.

_____ b) It gives the parent something concrete to use as a resource.

_____ c) It shows the parent that the teacher is serious about her desire to work with parents.

_____ d) (a) and (b).

_____ e) (a), (b) and (c).

11. What does the teacher communicate by Statement #11?

_____ a) That she does utilize parental input.

_____ b) That she was not well prepared in the meeting.

Activity 7

Your instructor will divide your class into groups of four. Each group will write a script for two of the following parent-teacher conferences.

1. It is the beginning of the school year. Leonard is a seven-year-old boy in a class for brain-injured children. Before this year, he had received home instruction. His teacher would like to find out more about what Leonard can and cannot do, and how he responds at home. She asks his mother to meet with her for this purpose.

2. Ann is a very cooperative but dependent five-year-old with a relatively mild case of cerebral palsy. She is in a regular kindergarten class, along with two other mildly handicapped children. One of the main goals that the teacher feels is appropriate for Ann during her kindergarten year is to become more independent of adults. The teacher believes that this goal will be much more readily accomplished if it is a mutual goal of the home and school. She asks the mother to meet with her to explore the possibility that joint planning for this goal is possible.

3. Kevin's parents have asked for a meeting with his teacher to discuss his academic progress. Kevin is an eight-year-old boy with an IQ of 63 who is in a special class for retarded children. He has multiple handicaps, such as slurred speech, poor motor control, and problems in visual perception. He is, however, a hard worker who will stick to a task until he has mastered it.

   Kevin's parents want the teacher to begin him in a formal reading program. While the teacher is doubtful, she is willing to consider the parents' point of view.

In writing these scripts, you should keep in mind the checklist mentioned in Activity 1 and the guidelines provided in Activity 3. In writing the parent responses, try to draw a realistic portrait. Before making copies of these scripts, the members of the group should take turns role-playing them, with two trainees playing the roles and two trainees evaluating the responses in each script.

Activity 8

Each group of trainees will select one final script to role-play to the whole group of trainees. The other script will be turned into the instructor for evaluation. The whole group of trainees will evaluate each role-played conference according to the checklist and guidelines provided in Activities 1 and 3. If any of the three conference situations is not presented, the instructor will set up an unrehearsed enactment of the roles involved.

Activity 9

Read the overview of home-school plans below.

An Overview of Home-School Plans

Not all parents are ready or able to undertake the role of home teacher in a formal sense, i.e., in the sense of carrying out specified kinds of activities within a certain time framework. Some parents are too burdened and tired and would see any such program as an imposition. These parents should not be pressed into participating, but should be invited to group and individual meetings and encouraged to make use of any ideas which seem helpful to them.

With time, some of these parents will want to participate more fully. Some parents want direction in helping their children but are so conflicted about them that they cannot carry out any home-teaching programs except in an atmosphere of tension. In this case the parent should probably be invited to participate only if the program is jointly run with a clinician and designed specifically to help lower the tension between parent and child, as is the case in many behavior modification programs. Some parents whose handicapped children

have just been accepted into school programs just need some time for themselves, perhaps, before they can involve themselves actively in the school program.

For those parents who are ready and able, parent-teacher planning may take two forms -- individual meetings and group meetings. The individual meeting is the appropriate situation for defining specific objectives for home teaching for particular children. It gives the teacher the opportunity to learn what the parent priorities are for each child. It also provides an opportunity for teacher demonstration and parent practice, both with and without the child present. The group meeting is appropriate when there are major common needs and objectives for a group of children. These meetings can be of the discussion type when planning is being done; but they are most usefully run as workshops when teaching strategies and methods are the focus. Specific guidelines for individual meetings and group workshops follow.

Individual Meetings[5]

1. Individual meetings should be arranged for parents who are not ready or able to participate in group meetings; or when the needs of a particular child are so special that small group meetings are not adequate for parental training; or when it is preferable to include the child in the meeting.
2. The time and place of these meetings should be arranged with parent needs uppermost.

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[5]Some of the ideas in these guidelines were derived from Karnes, M. B. and Zehrbach, R. R. Flexibility in getting parents involved in the school. Teaching Exceptional Children, 1972, 5, 12-13.

3. The content of these meetings should match parental concerns about the child as well as teacher concerns.
4. The parent-teacher relationship should be focused on mutual interest in helping the child.
5. Input from the parent about the child's functioning is solicited.
6. Short-term goals are either jointly selected or presented by the teacher as possibilities for parental support.
7. In general, at least one concrete idea for implementation should be decided upon at each meeting.
8. In general, each meeting should involve teacher demonstration, parent observation and/or parent practice of the idea(s) to be implemented.
9. The handicapped child often may be usefully included in part of the meeting. In some cases the child may participate during the whole meeting. Whenever the child is present, care must be taken to include him as a participant.
10. Plans for implementation, record-keeping, and follow-up should be worked out before the close of each meeting.
11. A written sheet which can serve as a guide and reminder to the parent is often a helpful thing to leave at the end of a meeting. Sometimes the teacher leaves some carefully selected instructional materials for use at home.

Small Group Workshop-type Meetings[6]

12. Small group meetings are useful for parents whose children have similar problems and needs.

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[6]Some of these ideas were derived from Karnes, M. B. and Zehrbach, R. R. Op.Cit. Some other ideas were derived from Cole, A. et al. Par presents: Workshop procedures. Northfield, Illinois: Par Project, 1971.

13. Small group workshop-type meetings are usually most effective when at least four and no more than twelve parents are involved.

14. Small group meetings are valuable opportunities for informal exchange among parents and between parents and teacher.

15. Small group workshop-type meetings are most effective when scheduled in series of at least two, so that there are opportunities for reporting back and further planning.

16. Parent interests and concerns should be reflected in the choice of content of the meetings.

17. Selection of time and place for the meetings should be made so as to best fit in with parent schedules and responsibilities.

18. Written communications about meetings may be supplemented by telephone calls in the case of parents who do not respond. In the families with no telephone, the teacher might consider going to the home to personally invite the parent to attend, or another parent from the neighborhood might be enlisted in personally contacting the parent.

19. The foci of the meetings should clearly be ways to help children learn. Emotional needs of the parents cannot be dealt with by the teacher alone. If these needs are strong and there are no existing channels for meeting them, the teacher might explore the possibility of a series of discussion meetings jointly conducted by herself and a clinician from the program.

20. Prepare a written plan for the meeting. This should include objectives, methods, and any materials or equipment that may be needed.
21. If you will be demonstrating activities, using audio-visual aids, or asking parents to engage in activities, be sure to practice these before the meeting.
22. Limit your meeting to two hours.
23. Build into the plan opportunities for active parent participation. Try to schedule an activity that allows for movement or doing something no later than one hour into the meeting.

    If at all possible, coffee and cookies or equivalent refreshment should be provided.

24. Arrive at the meeting place early to make sure you are there before the parents and to allow sufficient time for the setting up of materials or equipment.
25. Encourage a climate of "give and take" with parents -- welcome their suggestions and reactions.
26. It is often helpful to prepare a take-home sheet that can serve as a reminder to parents of ideas presented at the workshop.

Activity 10

Turn back to page 17 and reread the description of a group of five mothers of handicapped children given there. You are going to plan a workshop for these mothers, using the materials listed in Element II as resources. Begin by defining and listing your objective or objectives below. Then define the content focus of the workshop.

Objective(s):_____

_____

_____

_____

Content:_____

_____

_____

_____

Before going any further, stop and do the workshop-planning activity which follows.

Activity 11

You are now going to use a modified version of a Workshop Planning Kit.[7] (The number of Task Cards has been reduced and their content made more relevant to the parent workshop you will be designing.) Follow the directions given below in planning the workshop for the five mothers.

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[7]Carlson, N. Workshop planning kit. East Lansing, Michigan: Regional Instructional Materials Center for Handicapped Children and Youth, Michigan State University, undated.

Workshop Planning Kit

This Workshop Planning Kit is designed to assist workshop coordinators in mapping out all of the necessary steps involved in planning a workshop. The kit consists of a set of 21 separate cards.

First -- Cut all of these sheets! There are 2 cards on the next green sheet, 4 on the pink page, and 15 on the white pages following.

Now, you're ready for the kit.

Clear off a table. You'll need ample space to work on.

Next, examine your deck of cards. There are three different types of cards:

Start Cards (green) - beginning points in the planning process.

Task Cards (white) - activities that must be considered to effectively plan a workshop.

Closure Cards (pink) - used to signify the completion of various planning phases.

Select the appropriate Start Card and then lay out in sequential order those Task Cards that must be considered for your workshop. (You may branch where necessary.) Insert the Closure Cards at the appropriate points. Many cards have options listed. Use a pencil to check the options that are necessary to your plan. Blank cards can be used to write and insert any steps not included in the kit.

WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED, YOU'LL HAVE A FLOW CHART OF THE STEPS AND ACTIONS THAT WILL BE NEEDED TO SUCCESSFULLY CARRY OUT YOUR NEXT WORKSHOP.

Start Card

INITIATE IDEA

FOR WORKSHOP

Start Card

RECEIVE REQUEST

FOR WORKSHOP

Closure Card

PLANS FOR

PHYSICAL

ARRANGEMENTS

NOW COMPLETE

Closure Card

PLANS FOR

HUMAN RESOURCES

ARRANGEMENTS

NOW COMPLETE

Closure Card

PLANS FOR

COMMUNICATIONS

ARRANGEMENTS

NOW COMPLETE

Closure Card

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

AND EVALUATION

NOW COMPLETE

APPROPRIATE TIME FOR THE WORKSHOP

_____morning
_____afternoon
_____after school
_____evening
_____weekend

DETERMINE FOCUS OF

WORKSHOP (CONTENT)

DETERMINE WORKSHOP FORMAT

_____ large group participant

_____ small group participant interaction

_____ panel presentation

_____ media presentation (video-tape, slides, films, etc.)

_____ lecture

_____ demonstration

_____ other_____

MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

FOR MEETING ROOM

CHECK ON AMOUNT OF TIME

AVAILABLE FOR WORKSHOP

_____ half day

_____ two hours

_____ less than two hours

IDENTIFY TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS

___ parents of young handicapped children (under age 9)

___ parents of intermediate age handicapped children (9-12)

___ parents of teenage handicapped children

___ parents of mildly impaired children

___ parents of moderately impaired children

___ parents of severely impaired children

MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR NECESSARY EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE

_____tables
_____chairs
_____overhead projector
_____screen
_____chalkboard (chalk & eraser)
_____other_____

_____videotape recorder
_____camera & film
_____filmstrip projector
_____prepared transparencies
_____slide projector
_____tape recorder & microphone

INVITE THE PARTICIPANTS BY NOTE WITH RESPONSE FORM ATTACHED. FOLLOW UP, WHEN NECESSARY, BY TELEPHONE OR VISIT.

MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO DUPLICATE NECESSARY MATERIALS

_____videotapes

_____slides

_____cassette tapes

_____reel-to-reel tapes

_____printed material

_____other_____

CONDUCT WORKSHOP

LOCATE EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO PRODUCE WORKSHOP MATERIALS

_____thermofax machine
_____videotape recorder
_____television camera
_____slide camera
_____cassette tape recorder

_____ditto machine
_____mimeograph machine
_____Xerox copier
_____reel-to-reel tape recorder

MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COFFEE BREAKS

OBTAIN NECESSARY WORKSHOP SUPPLIES FOR PARTICIPANTS

_____note paper

_____pens, pencils or markers

_____handouts

_____other_____

COLLECT MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED FOR DISPLAY, DEMONSTRATION OR INTERACTION.

SPECIFY OBJECTIVES

Activity 12

Now complete the planning of the workshop begun in Activity 10 by doing the following:

1. Make an outline of your workshop, listing approximate times for each activity.
2. Describe each activity in detail, giving the procedure and telling what you will say.
3. Describe your preparations for the workshop.
4. Describe the steps you will take to make the workshop carry over to the home.
5. Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop.

Activity 13

This is a group activity. Your instructor will schedule a class meeting then divide the class into small groups of four or five participants.

A workshop designed by one of the trainees in each group will be selected for implementation by that group. The group will go through all the steps of preparing for and carrying out the workshop. One trainee will serve as a group leader while the other trainees role-play the parents described in this assignment. Each group will then evaluate and, when necessary, redesign the workshop.

POST-ASSESSMENT

You have now completed Module II. Make arrangements with your instructor to retake the pre-assessment, or those questions on the pre-assessment dealing with activities from which you were not exempted. If you have been doing your work, this will be nothing more than a short exercise which gives you the opportunity to show what you have learned.

APPENDIX

Element I - Readings

Answer Key

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T
6. T
7. T
8. F
9. T
10. T
11. F
12. T
13. T
14. T
15. F
16. F
17. T
18. T
19. T
20. T
21. T
22. T
23. T
24. F
25. T

A Checklist for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Shirley Cohen
July, 1974

What is the teacher's role in relating to parents of her handicapped pupils? It is:

Yes - To welcome communication with parents about the child.

Yes - To communicate her dedication to helping their child learn.

Yes - To communicate her desire to work cooperatively with parents toward this end.

Yes - To listen to parental concerns and goals for their child.

Yes - To communicate a willingness to learn about the parent's point of view.

Yes - To communicate an interest in working in a complementary manner with the home.

Yes - To explain the goals and program in the classroom for the child.

Yes - To report on the child's progress.

Yes - To offer ideas for possible use in the home for helping the child learn.

Yes - To make use of information and (selected) ideas obtained from parents.

Yes - To suggest and/or arrange for the parent to see a clinician or other specialist when the parent expresses a need for personal help.

It is <u>not</u>:

No - To probe parent feelings about themselves or their child.

No - To give advice about personal and inter-personal problems of family members.

No - To give parents "assignments" to carry out in their home which were not mutually conceived and fashioned.

No - To criticize or berate parents for not doing enough.

Element III - Readings

Activity 2

1. Advantage: Very often stimulates freer exchange between parent and teacher.

   Disadvantage: The teacher may not be prepared in terms of what she wants to communicate to this parent and how. If things are not going well for this child in school, the teacher may feel ill at ease in an unplanned conference.

   (See reading #2 for Activity 1, p. 259)

2. Advantage: Sometimes this is the only way to begin communication with a parent.

   It can prevent long delays in parent-teacher communication in cases where immediacy is important.

   (See reading #2 for Activity 1, p. 261)

3. Advantage: The child doesn't feel that his parent or teacher is hiding anything from him. He can be included in planning designed to help him.

   Disadvantage: Parents sometimes need to express concerns which would create unnecessary anxiety for the child.

   (See reading #2 for Activity 1, p. 263)

4. Advantage: The teacher learns what the child's life-space outside the school is like. The teacher sees the parent in her natural environment and therefore may get a better sample of the parent's usual behavior. The child and the parent may see the teacher's visit as a sign that she really cares about the child.

Disadvantage: Some parents (and children) may be uncomfortable about having the teacher in their home.

(See reading #2 for Activity 1, p. 269)

5. -- In teacher-initiated meetings the teacher should establish the the purpose -- goal or objective(s) -- for the meeting. Even when the meeting is parent-initiated, the teacher should be prepared in terms of goals which she might be interested in pursuing, should they fit into the meeting appropriately.
   -- She should review the child's records, particularly her objectives for him and his progress toward those objectives.
   -- She should prepare questions to elicit any information she wants to obtain.
   -- She should have some ideas in mind or on paper that she may want to bring up at the meeting.
   -- She might select some of the child's work products to show to the parents to illustrate her communications.
   -- She should have some ideas prepared for how the parents can help, if they seem interested and the situation seems right.

   (See reading #2 for Activity 1, p. 280)

6. Listen but not deal with these expressions during the meeting. Afterwards, alert the school clinician of the possible need for help in this situation.
7. All of the questions listed.
8. All but the last alternative are appropriate.
9. Let the parent tell her story first. Then offer an explanation or take other appropriate action.
10. All of the factors listed.

    (See reading #1 for Activity 1)

Element III - Interview Excerpts

Activity 4

1. c
2. c
3. b,a
4. a,b
5. b

Activity 5

1. Poor - The parent requested the conference. The teacher should have begun the conference by encouraging the parent to tell why she did so.

   Better - Please tell me what's on your mind.

2. Poor - The teacher initiated the conference. She should, therefore, have a purpose or objective in mind, and should begin by stating it.

   Better - I'm trying to get to know the mothers of my pupils so that I can plan better for how to help each child. It would be very useful if I could find out what Howard does when he's not in school, and what you and his father see as very important for him.

3. Poor - A home-teaching program for a handicapped child should be seen by the parent as something important that she wants to participate in. Most of the time, the home-teaching program should be tailored to the special needs and qualities of each child and home.

Better - It is sometimes very helpful for a child to have practice at home in the kinds of things he is learning at school. If you are interested, we can work out some ideas for things for Larry to do at home.

4. Poor - This is a closed question which leads to a yes or no answer. The teacher should have used an open question to stimulate elaboration.

Better - What do you think about Larry's progress?

5. Poor - This response implies criticism.

Better - Larry starts to get restless and asks for cookies at about 9:30 in the morning. I was wondering if he might be hungry. (This may elicit needed information about whether Larry does in fact go without breakfast and why.)

6. Poor - Conflict between parents is an area which should be turned over to a clinician, or which should be handled by a teacher-counselor team. Such conflict is rarely resolved as quickly and easily as the teacher's statement implies.

Better - Our social worker meets with several of the parents of children in the program. Perhaps you'd like me to help you set up a meeting with her.

Note - In situations where clinicians are not available either in the educational facility or within a community facility, teachers can provide valuable help for families like this one through small group parent meetings which focus on such topics as:

Setting appropriate goals for children; the development of social controls and competencies; behavior management techniques.

7. Poor - The teacher is calling forth emotions which she may well be unable to deal with.

   Better - We all get upset at times and do things we wouldn't usually do.

8. Poor - The teacher's statement implies that any good mother would do this. The teacher is forcing the mother to say yes to something she may not be able to carry out.

   Better - Perhaps we can figure out some things for you to do with Larry at home that can fit into your schedule. We can talk about how to do them.

Activity 6

1. c
2. b
3. d
4. appropriate
5. poor; d
6. appropriate
7. To find out what are real possibilities for parent teaching in the home; to show the mother the inherent learning possibilities of situations in which she and her daughter normally interact; to avoid giving the mother a burdensome "assignment."
8. yes
9. d
10. e
11. a